

Climbing & Crawling

ROTC: Experience in the field

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the base's firing ranges. All were planned in an effort to expose ROTC members to the concept of teamwork and to instill self-confidence, Slatton said.

The obstacle and confidence courses forced cadets to push their physical and mental limits as they climbed 40-foot high rope ladders, crawled under barbed wire and jumped over hurdles, while also negotiating high wind gusts and cold temperatures.

For Chaudhry, traversing through the courses became a test of will and dedication.

"The obstacle course helped me face my fears and build confidence," he said. "When people are supporting you, you don't think about fears as much."

Cooper Bradshaw, a business junior, said it was a good learning experience that provided insight into how the army operates.

"It's a new experience for me," he said. "I've had family who was involved in it and I wanted to see it from the inside. It is a different way of life. There is much more organization."

Cadets also had the opportunity to fire M-16 rifles and 9-millimeter pistols, albeit for a very short time. The first group of cadets on the M-16 firing range, many firing weapons for the first time, accidental-

ly set a cluster of tall dry brush on fire after firing tracer rounds, which allow the shooter to see where exactly their bullets are heading. The small fire was quickly extinguished by the base's fire department; however, shooting did not resume.

Despite the tough physical and mental obstacles cadets had to overcome during the training weekend, there were down times when they could just get to know one another better. At night, cadets built campfires and watched movies projected on the side of their U-Haul truck.

"It is much more like a camping trip," Slatton said. "We show cadets the lighter side and the more fun aspects of what we do in ROTC and in the military. We aren't all serious. We let our hair down once in a while."

Business senior Angelika Klien knew the weekend would provide good times mixed with some hard work.

"I just came out here to have a fun time," she said. "Pretty much everything here stresses teamwork and the good thing about that is you make some really good friends."

Students see each other in lectures, but don't really have the chance to get to know one another in the classroom, Chaudhry said.

"Most of the people here, I didn't know before this weekend," he said. "Now I do."



SAUL LOEB/Arizona Daily Wildcat

PHOTOS BY SAUL LOEB



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:

Above: An Army ROTC cadet climbs to the top of a rope-ladder obstacle.

Below: Nick Williams, a psychology senior, demonstrates the proper technique for firing the M-16 assault rifle.

Below left: Cadet Captain Michael Spears, a history senior, attempts to make an obstacle more difficult on the Confidence Course by spinning the log that cadets must jump over to move onto the next obstacle.

Below far left: Civil engineering sophomore Evan Munson tries to lift a fellow cadet to the top of an obstacle on the Confidence Course.

Above left: Accounting senior Dan Harris crawls under barbed wire Saturday at Fort Huachuca.

